GOD WITH US.

Mtt.1:23 And they shall call his name Immanuel; which is, being interpreted, God with us."

Intro. This text, taken from one of the Messianic prophecies of Isaiah, occasioned an extended discussion in our class in Seminary.

According to some scholars "virgin" means nothing more than "A young woman" whether married or unmarried. The interpretation being that some young wife would give ger child about to be born the name "Immanuel", signifying that she believed that God was still with Israel.

According to other scholars Isaiah expected the Messiah soon to appear, about to be born of one pf the royal wives.

As a fact none of the O.T. prophecies were ever fulfilled according to original expectations. The prophets spoke larger and better than they knew. Their hopes and expectations were not fulfilled until their came One who met all the requirements of their prophecies- that one was Jesus, born of the virgin Mary in Bethlehem, Judea.

Your remember how in Sir Thomas Mallory's ~~Kijg~~ King Arthur, Arthur was declared King of Britain.

When Utherpendragon died he left no apparent heir to the throne. A contention among the barons. Then the Archbishop of Canterbury, summoned barons and knights to London on Xmas Eve, and on Xmas day held service for them in the great church. When they were leaving the church they saw in the church yard a great square stone, and in the center of it a large anvil and buried securely in the anvil a naked and gleamingsword, on which was written,"Whoso pulleth this sword out of this stone and anvil, the same is rightwise King of England."

One after another of the great barons and lords tried but all failed, but Arthur, the ~~p~~ unknown son of a simple knight easily pulled forth the sword from the anvil.

This was repeated at Candlemas, at Easter and at Pentacost with the same result, hence it was made plain to all that Arthur was the rightful successor to Utherpendragon.

After the same manner we find the O.T. cantaining many prophecies of the coming Messiah. These prophecies were expected to be fulfilled in various ways and by various persons. He who could answer to the name,"Immanuel" would be recognized as the rightful Messiah. And just as Arthur alone could withdraw the sword from the anvil, so Jesus alone fulfills the name,Immanuel.

2. What to us is the significance of the name, Immanuel?

I. Just what it says, God with us.

Many cannot understand how the Infinite and Almighty who created the universe can be with us finite creatures of this little earth. How can God appear in human life?

1. If God is a personal being who has created us as personal beings why should He not reveal Himself to us and hold intercourse with us?

2. It is in the nature of man to possess a capacity for God. Man is a moral and spiritual being ever longing after God.

3. Our most perfect men are they in whose consciousness the sense of oneness with God was most strongly realized. The fulness of God in the perfect man- Christ Jesus.

II. The manifestation of God in human life has made Him knowable to us.

1. God could not make Himself known adequately in his works. Creation reveals God's creative genius, power and majesty, but not Himself, his heart, his personal spirit. Example, the watch. It bespeaks of the watch-maker's skill and genius, but tells but little of himself personally.

2. Personality con only express itself thru personality.

a. Thru imperfect men God could reveal Himself but imperfectly. And yet God is more fully revealed to us thru imperfect human beings than thru all of His other perfect ~~#####~~ creations. History before Christ, especially thru the personalities of the sacred writings, tells us much about God, makes God known to us in great degree.

b. But in Jesus Christ God is revealed to us as knowable in a still larger and a unique sense. "I and my Father are one". "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Immanuel-God with us!

Matthew Henry puts it, "By the light of nature we see God as a God above us; by the light of the law we see God as a God against us; but by the light of the Gospel we see Him as Immanuel, God with us, in our nature, and (which is more) in our interest."

God is for us and with us and on our side.

III. God is with us as our Savior.

The angel's announciation to Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for it is He that save His people from their sins."

If God is Immanuel, God with us, it naturally would be his supreme desire to save us should we be lost. "God so loved the world, etc." Why did God so love the world of humanity? Because He is God with us- he is for us and not against us.

This is why God in Christ lived our life, faced our temptations, bore our [illegible], carried our sorrows and died our death. God is Immanuel- with us and is Jesus, our Savior and Redeemer.

IV. God as Immanuel is our present Helper.
God is our Friend and Guide and Helper.

According to the Gospel story Jesus influenced men to grow strong and brave and true.

The unstable Peter grew steadfast.
The miserly Zacchaeus grew generous.
The polluted Mary grew holy.
The doubting Thomas became a strong tower of convictin
The murderous Saul became the apostle of loving ministration.

Hundreds and thousands since, living Immanuelly, have likewise been strengthened and purified.

"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world"

And still, as we touch Him we grow brave and strong and steadfast and pure, becoming more than conquerors thru Christ Jesus.

Remember the story of the three mnn in the fiery furmace- they were not alone in the furnace, for another was with them even like unto the Son of God, who crot them forth out of the furnace unscathed.

Even so, neither are we alone. We are cast into the furnaceo of affliction, but we are not alone in the furnace because Christ who is Immanuel, God with us, helps us to overcome our temptations, surmount our troubles, and triumph over all, even over death itself.